

## **PADDINGTON CEMETERY**

Listed on the National Heritage List for England. [Search over 400,000 listed places](#)

### **Official list entry**

Heritage Category:

### **Park and Garden**

Grade:

**II**

List Entry Number:

**1001542**

Date first listed:

**26-Jul-2001**

### **The scope of legal protection for listed buildings**

This list entry identifies a Park and/or Garden which is registered because of its special historic interest.

[Understanding registered parks and gardens](#)

[Corrections and minor amendments](#)

### **Location**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:

### **Greater London Authority**

District:

### **Brent (London Borough)**

Parish:

### **Non Civil Parish**

National Grid Reference:

**TQ 24562 83752**

### **Details**

One of the first public cemeteries to be opened after the Metropolitan Interment Act of 1850, designed by Thomas Little in 1855.

### **HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT**

In 1855 Paddington Burial Board built a public cemetery on c 10ha of land in rural Willesden. Thomas

Little, who had designed the chapel for Nunhead Cemetery in Southwark (qv), laid out a series of paths in the shape of a horseshoe. Trees were planted along the paths (map, 1855), lodges built on either side of the entrance, and two Gothic-style chapels erected in the centre of the cemetery grounds. When the cemetery was laid out in 1855 it stood in a rural landscape; it is now a green open space in the midst of urban development.

In 1986 the City of Westminster sold the cemetery to the London Borough of Brent in whose management it continues (2000). Paddington Cemetery received a Special Commendation in the 'Cemetery of the Year Awards' in 1999, the cemetery office being praised for their work in reinstating the cemetery from closed status to local use.

#### DESCRIPTION

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Paddington Cemetery is situated in Willesden, c 5.8km north-west of the centre of London. The setting is generally residential, with Queen's Park close by to the south-west. The c 10ha level rectangular site lies east of Salusbury Road. Housing, partly combined with gardens, marks the boundary of the cemetery to the north on Willesden Lane and Kimberley Road, to the east on Tennyson Road, to the south on Lonsdale Road, and to the west on Salusbury Road. The Salusbury County School lies at the south-west corner of the site.

The boundary is principally marked by the original high brick wall combined with lines of trees or shrubbery. Along the north boundary the original wall has been partially replaced by the brick walls of new houses.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The main entrance is situated at the north corner of the site, giving access from the south-west side of Willesden Lane. It consists of a wrought-iron gate with flanking pedestrian gates in a semicircular forecourt. The brick gate piers, which have draped stone urns on top, are continued to either side by c 1m high curving brick walls set with small iron railings. Iron doors at the corners provide private approaches to the two lodges. On the western gate pier are two plaques: one records the site's commendation in the 'Cemetery of the Year Awards' in 1999, while on the other the site's name is imprinted. Two Gothic-style lodges, now (2000) in private use, stand adjacent to each side of the main entrance. A wooden shelter to the rear of the eastern gate pier formerly housed the cemetery office. The main drive leads c 170m south-west from the entrance to the chapels, crossing the paths of the perimeter, middle, and inner semicircles of the horseshoe design.

Three minor entrances are marked by iron doors situated on the south-west boundary. One provides access to Salusbury School while the other two currently (2000) open onto a construction site on Salusbury Road. A further iron gate in the north corner of the site provides access to the children's playground from Tennyson Road.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** The two chapels (listed grade II) stand towards the centre of the site and provide the centrepiece of the cemetery layout. These twin chapels, linked by two porte-cochères, were designed by Thomas Little in C13 Gothic style and constructed from Kentish squared ragstone. The central belfry between the two arches is now (2000) used as a lodge. The chapels were originally designed for Anglicans (to the west) and Nonconformists (to the east), but only one remains in use.

**OTHER LAND** Paddington Cemetery is designed in a near-symmetrical grid-pattern about a north-

west/south-east axis. The path layout forms a horseshoe shape, open to the south-east, with three semicircular drives to the north-west of the chapels, and to the south-east straight paths leading to the south-east boundary. Between these main walks are minor paths in a grid-pattern. In the north-west part three radial main paths extend from the chapels in the centre, the north-east one being the approach from the main entrance. The main internal views of the cemetery focus on the chapels, while minor views following the straight paths south-east of the chapels terminate either at a stone cross or in the cemetery's landscape.

The concentration of graves is higher in the north-western half than in the south-eastern half of the cemetery, the former part containing the grander of the old tombs and most of the modern graves, while the latter part consists of areas with old graves and urns. The urnfields to the south-east of the chapels are situated on hilly ground enclosed by evergreens. The cemetery is planted with a collection of c 500 mature trees including oak, ash, horse chestnut, and cedars.

The original plan of 1855 (Curl 1980) shows the symmetrical horseshoe layout with the grid paths joining a perimeter walk at circular or semicircular rondpoints planted with beds and trees. The outer perimeter semicircle is now (2000) combined with a row of mature limes. The perimeter path survives except in the east and south-east, but the rondpoints do not. The south-eastern perimeter path now runs north of the area known as God's Acre; it is not clear when the eastern corner ceased to be used for burials and finally became overgrown.

The north-west/south-east axis, which starts at two old tombs on the north boundary, terminates at a stone cross on the south-east boundary after passing under the central belfry between the chapels. The stone cross is a memorial to those who lay in God's Acre but whose names are unrecorded. God's Acre forms a strip c 30 wide along the east and south-east boundaries which includes the Paddington Cemetery Nature Area. The Nature Area contains many mature trees which are complemented by underplanting to create a natural woodland setting. Only a few graves arranged in two parallel rows remain in this part of the ground.

A war memorial lies c 20m west of the western entrance lodge. This occupies a small rectangular area adjacent to the formal rose beds south-west of the lodge. To the west of the war memorial is the service yard. To the rear of the eastern lodge is a further formal rose bed; south-east of this a children's play area replaces an area of former glasshouses.

## REFERENCES

Curl J S, *A Celebration of Death* (1980), 293-4 Cherry B and Pevsner N, *The Buildings of England: London North West 3*, (1991), 125 Meller H, *London Cemeteries* (3rd edn 1994), 41, 238-9 *Paddington Old Cemetery*, leaflet, (Cemetery Office, late-C20)

Maps *Plan of the cemetery for the parish of Paddington, 1855* (in Curl 1980) *Survey map of Paddington Cemetery*, late-C20 (Cemetery Office)

OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1865 3rd edition published 1920

Archival items Newspaper articles, 1999 (Cemetery Office)

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION Paddington Cemetery is designated at Grade II for the following

principal reasons: \* A fine early High Victorian (1855) public cemetery for the Metropolis. \* One of the first public cemeteries to be opened after the Metropolitan Interment Act of 1850. \* The cemetery was laid out with a geometric horseshoe pattern of paths by the London architect Thomas Little (who had earlier designed the chapel at Nunhead, qv) \* Little also designed the Gothic-style structures including an imposing ensemble of twin chapels linked by a porte cochere as the focus of the design. \* The layout and structures survive intact and in good condition. \* Metropolitan social interest is expressed in a plethora of C19 monuments.

Description written: April 2000 Register Inspector: PS Edited: December 2009

This List entry has been amended to add the source for War Memorials Register. This source was not used in the compilation of this List entry but is added here as a guide for further reading, 11 July 2017.

### **Legacy**

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number:

**4945**

Legacy System:

### **Parks and Gardens**

### **Sources**

#### **Websites**

War Memorials Register, accessed 11 July 2017

from <http://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/58091>

### **Legal**

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.

.

### **Map**

This map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. This copy shows the entry on 28-Oct-2024 at 13:09:07.

[Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

© Crown Copyright and database right 2024. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900. © British Crown and SeaZone Solutions Limited 2024. All rights reserved. Licence number 102006.006.

Use of this data is subject to [Terms and Conditions](#).

**End of official list entry**